

## **ABSTRACT**

The present invention is directed to a system and method for filtering packets for a printing device. An IP address filter resides within an SNMP agent and acts to filter incoming SNMP packets, thereby restricting the visibility of the printing device to a small select group of users. An administrator determines the range of IP addresses to either allow access or reject. The filter comprises a reference IP address, within the range of administrator selected addresses and assigns an action corresponding to the selected addresses. The action may be either allowing the SNMP packet to be processed, or rejecting the SNMP packet and dropping the packet without replying to the sending address. To determine if the incoming packet source address matches the reference address, a 32-bit mask is also included within the filter.